

GULF WING

July-August 2007

*Home of the Hurricane Hunters and Flying Jennies
403rd Wing, Air Force Reserve Command, Keesler AFB, Miss.*

Reaching for the Stars

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Special Pullout Section: Hurricane Preparedness Guide, See Page 13

JUL-AUG 2007

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If the Shoe Fits . . .

Whether she is preparing aircrews for the flightline or stomping down the fashion runway herself, Senior Airman Diechea McGee follows both her dreams toward success.

Special Pullout: Hurricane Preparedness Guide

Hurricane season officially began June 1 and continues through Nov. 30. For the first time, this hurricane season the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron will be flying with a 'smurf.' No, not the cartoon, but a new piece of equipment to collect more data for the National Hurricane Center.



Dusty Mission: Flying Jennies Support Global War on Terror

Scorching temperatures, dirt runways, dust storms, and other oddities may not seem like the ideal conditions for operating a C-130, but stand fast; 815th Airlift Squadron aircrews are out to prove the C-130J is the optimal tactical airlift aircraft.

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On the Cover: Stars— Page 22

Taking the hobby of stargazing to another level, Lt. Col. Jon Talbot built an observatory in his backyard where he captures images of deep space objects such as this photo of IC 4604 in the southern constellation Ophiuchus.

What's Happening?

Know of an upcoming exercise or unit deployment? Are there special events planned at your unit? Contact your Unit Public Affairs Rep or call Public Affairs at 377-2056.

UTA AND TRAINING CALENDAR

22-23 September
 13-14 October
 3-4 November
 8-9 December
 ORE: September
 19-23
 ORI: December
 11-15

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Gulf Wing Awards
 1st Place, Best Magazine, Air Force Media Contest, 2003, 2004
 1st Place, Best Command Publication, AFRC Media Contest, 2004, 2005
 1st Place, Best Magazine, AFRC Media Contest, 1989, 2003, 2004, 2005

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Photo by Tech. Sgt. Steve Martin, 41st APS, UPR

Gulf Wing ORI Prep

Saddle Up

Getting ready for the upcoming Operational Readiness Exercise in September and Operational Readiness Inspection in December, the 41st Aerial Port Squadron conducted an in-ranks inspection during the June Unit training assembly. Citizen Airmen throughout the wing have been testing their Ability to Survive and Operate by donning the protective gear each UTA and conducting additional training both in the chemical warfare gear and in classroom settings.

PROMOTIONS

Lieutenant Colonel

Jonathan A. Bridges, 53rd WRS
 Keith M. Gibson, 403rd OG
 Timothy M. Holmen, 403rd WG
 Daniel R. Jones, 53rd WRS
 Patrick Lemaire, 53rd WRS
 Gregory H. Lufkin, 403rd OG
 Kelvin D. McElroy, 403rd MXS
 David E. Palmer, 815th AS
 Jesse K. Pearson, 96th APS
 Frank E. Poukner, 53rd WRS
 Joseph P. Roche, 53rd WRS
 David M. Russell, 815th AS

Major

Chap. Timothy M. Broughton 403rd WG

Chief Master Sergeant

Vincent Armata, 403rd MXG
 Ronald E. Childres, 403rd LRS
 Richard A. Cumbo, 53rd WRS
 Michael W. Moore, 403rd SFS
 Bernell Nevil, 403rd MXG

Senior Master Sergeant

Ronal G. Yokley, 403rd SFS

Master Sergeant

Louis M. Reese, 403rd SFS

Newcomers

Tech. Sgt. Bridgette M. Alvarez, 403rd OSF
 Capt. John Anderson, 53rd WRS
 Senior Airman Trakeila K. Autman, 815th AS
 Lt. Col. Kenneth J. Bartzak, 403rd OSF
 Airman Addison B. Black, 403rd MXS
 Senior Airman Ryan C. Boone, 53rd WRS
 Airman 1st Class Stephanie Braquet, 53rd WRS
 Maj. Stephanie A. Brown, 815th AS
 Staff Sgt. Mark A. Bryant, 403rd AMXS
 Senior Airman Brian W. Byers, 403rd MXS
 Airman 1st Class Rayford L. Campbell, 41st APS
 Capt. Andrew D. Clark, 53rd WRS
 Staff Sgt. Heidi L. Curry, 403rd ASTS
 Master Sgt. Shawnta D. Daye, 403rd ASTS
 Airman Jennifer L. Draughn, 403rd ASTS
 Airman 1st Class Rosco J. Fairley, 41st APS
 Tech. Sgt. Debra Faulkner, 96th APS
 Staff Sgt. Jacqueline Gramsch, 96th APS
 1st Lt. Douglas Gautrau, 53rd WRS
 Staff Sgt. Shantel M. Gibson, 403rd WG
 Senior Airman Corey B. Gordon, 41st APS
 Lt. Col. Cordell T. Gray, 53rd WRS
 Maj. Stephan C. Houston, 403rd OSF
 Airman 1st Class Nicole Humphrey, 403rd MOF
 Senior Airman Bryan L. Huntzberry, 403rd CC
 Staff Sgt. Daniel R. James, 403rd AMXS
 Airman Jessica R. Johnson, 403rd CES
 Airman Mashekia Johnson, 403rd MOF
 Tech. Sgt. Robbie M. Julian, 403rd ASTS
 Airman Maisha T. Lampkin, 403rd LRS
 Senior Airman Tamorra T. Lee, 41st APS
 Airman 1st Class Jennifer Lessard, 403rd AMXS

Gulf Wing Salutes

Senior Airman Arthur W. Lewis III, 403rd MXS
 Airman Jeremy L. McAdory, 53rd WRS
 Senior Airman Jefferey R. McCain, 403rd AMXS
 Capt. Clifton A. McWhorter, 41st APS
 Staff Sgt. Miranda M. Mellanese, 403rd ASTS
 Tech. Sgt. Carrie A. Meyls, 403rd MSF
 Airman Victoria M. Moore, 403rd SVF
 Staff Sgt. Corey J. Morris, 403rd SFS
 Airman 1st Class Jonathan Murphy, 403rd CES
 Airman Justin D. Necaie, 53rd WRS
 Senior Airman Tijuania L. Odom, 403rd LRS
 Senior Airman David N. Perkins, 403rd MXS
 Staff Sgt. Cameron S. Phillips, 403rd MXS
 Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Prather, 41st APS
 Senior Airman Pamela D. Register, 403rd MXS
 Senior Airman Robert J. Register, 403rd AMXS
 Senior Airman Bobby Roberts, 96th APS
 Maj. Brian K. Schroeder, 53rd WRS
 Capt. Curtis J. Shaffer, 403rd ASTS
 Senior Airman Dawana Sharpless, 403rd ASTS
 Senior Airman David C. Shook, 403rd AMXS
 Senior Airman Jeffrey S. Slawson, 403rd MXS
 Senior Airman Roc A. St Martin, 403rd MXS
 Airman Monica Sullivan, 53rd WRS
 Capt. Glenn G. Thiel, 403rd OSF
 Airman 1st Class Jakob L. Utsey, 41st APS
 Staff Sgt. Heather R. Vaughan, 403rd OSF
 Tech. Sgt. Willie Williams Jr, 403rd AMXS



Photo by Senior Airman Tabitha Sparks



Photo by Zach L. Justin Pearce

(Above) Colonel Guy Favaloro speaks at his change of command ceremony in which he assumed command of the 403rd Aeromedical Staging Squadron. Previously, Colonel Favaloro was the medical commander of the 926th Medical Squadron. When the 926th Fighter Wing shut down due to Base Realignment and Closure, he was responsible for relocating medical personnel.



(Top) 1st Lt. Russell Shoultz, 403rd ASTS, was recently awarded EMT Paramedic of the Year by the Veterans of Foreign War in Louisiana. With more than 16 years experience in saving lives, his winning the state award qualifies the lieutenant as a candidate for the national award.

(Left) Maj. Michael Grubb (right) assumes command of the 41st Aerial Port Squadron from Col. Michael Dawson, commander, 403rd Mission Support Group, at the unit's change of command ceremony. The major was previously assigned as commander of the 403rd Civil Engineer Squadron. Colonel Dawson presided over two changes of command before participating in his own. Lt. Col. Kathryn Karr takes over as the new commander of the Mission Support Group. Read a command message from Colonel Karr on Page 27.



(Bottom) Maj. Otto Ford (left) accepts the guidon of the 403rd Civil Engineer Squadron from Col. Michael Dawson symbolizing his assumption of command of the 403rd Civil Engineer Squadron at his change of command ceremony. Maj. Ford was previously commander of 41st Aerial Port Squadron from 2005-2007.

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Steve Martin, 41st Aerial Port Squadron, JPAP



Photo by Senior Airman Tabitha Sparks

(Above) Brig. Gen. Richard Moss pins Ann Kranz, at her retirement ceremony in June. Mrs. Kranz completed 36 years of federal service, of which 19 were served with the 403rd Wing. Family and friends joined her at Vrazels restaurant to celebrate and show appreciation for her hard work and dedication. She was awarded the Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award by General Moss and received a letter of appreciation from the Department of the Air Force signed by President George W. Bush. This marks the end of a more than remarkable career. Mrs. Kranz began her federal service career at the Keesler Commissary in 1971 and quickly excelled leading to several promotions at 81st Medical Center and other agencies on the base. She first worked for the 403rd Tactical Airlift Wing as a budget analyst in 1991 and left the Wing for two years from 1998-2000 to serve at Headquarters, Pacific Air Force, Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. Since returning, she spent her last seven years with the 403rd as the Financial Analysis Officer where she held great responsibilities. "I've kept a job since I got out of high school and never really had quality time. Now, I get to spend time with my family and visit with friends for lunch with no worries about limited time," said Mrs. Kranz. "I've always enjoyed reading and I've been able to just kick back and read book." She and her husband, Michael, are currently gearing up for a cruise on the Queen Mary II.



Photo by Senior Airman Tabitha Sparks

(Above) Lt. Col. Doug Lipscombe endures the traditional hose down after his final flight. Dousing is a ritual of honor bestowed upon aviators who are retiring from service or sometimes moving on to a new job at a different unit. Colonel Lipscombe served with the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron as an Aerial Reconnaissance Weather Officer and instructor. He retired with 28 years of military service.

(Below) Senior Master Sgt. Donald Hamilton (left), superintendent, vehicle operations and Senior Master Sgt. Donald McCutcheon, superintendent, vehicle maintenance take a final look under the hood of a transportation assigned truck. Both of these veteran NCOs recently retired from the 403rd Logistics Readiness Squadron.



Photos by Master Sgt. Cecil Baruch, 403rd LRS, JPAP

J'nette

A Passion to Sing, a Passion to Serve

By Tech. Sgt. Ryan Labadens
Staff Writer



A publicity photo of the artist, J'nette, from her website.

For some, the passion to sing, dance, write, or follow another creative pursuit, can form instantly. For others, these passions develop slowly, nurtured by a desire to fulfill a dream and sparked by the encouragement of family and friends.

For Senior Airman Jeannette Hemphill, a personnel apprentice in the 815th Airlift Squadron, that growing passion was music. She began her journey into performing at an early age. When she was only four, she started singing gospel music with her church choir, King David Number 2 Missionary Baptist Church, in her home town of Vicksburg, Miss. She joined the school choir in fifth grade, and sang through her senior year.

She didn't consider pursuing a career in music until a few years after high school. Her parents continued to play an integral part in nurturing her musical pursuits, encouraging her at every step along the path.

"My dad is always saying, 'Money isn't an issue. If you want to do it, I'm behind you.' And my mom's like, 'You'll make it, baby, you'll make it,'" said the outgoing Citizen Airman.

Her first professional performance was with a rhythm and blues group called More Than Enough, which she and two other girls formed in 1998 while still in high school. The trio performed at auditoriums and convention centers across the South, often serving as an opening act for R&B bands and artists such as Shirley Murdock, T.K. Soul and Usher.

The girls from More Than Enough went their separate ways after graduating in

2001. Later that year, Airman Hemphill decided to join the Air Force, mainly for the educational opportunities. She served on active duty from 2001 to 2004 at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., as a personnel assistant for the base hospital's command and support staff. Even though in civilian life she is taking classes for a degree in Business, her heart still belongs to music.

"It's the only thing I can see myself doing," said the Reservist, whose voice emits a strong soulful tone. "I've been doing some accounting work back home as well, but it's nothing like singing. I love the adrenaline rush it gives me."

She started singing R&B solo in 2005, shortly after the birth of her daughter, Jaylenn. Airman Hemphill and her husband, Steven, have a four-year-old son, who is also named Steven.

She recently completed her first demo CD, a rhythm and blues compilation which she plans to distribute to national radio stations in the hopes of generating a larger interest in her music. In the studio, recording her musical tracks becomes a long and winding journey unto itself. Her voice and each of the instruments are recorded separately and then assembled at the end. Her husband plays a part in this process, adding his skills on the keyboard to her vocal talent.

Still singing with her church choir in Vicksburg, her desire to entertain remains a driving force as she pursues her passion. She also views singing as an opportunity to give something back to both her church and her community.

Taking community spirit a step further, she offers advice and support to others

beginning their trek toward a career in singing. "A lot of people are helping me with my career right now, so I just want to do the same thing for others," she said.

Always willing to serve, she uses her talents to enliven a variety of events sponsored by the 403rd Wing. She has performed at retirement ceremonies and lifts her voice in song regularly at Sunday-morning UTA worship services, where she returns to her gospel roots.

"Airman Hemphill's singing embodies what Psalm 150 emphasizes: 'Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord,'" said Master Sgt. Claude Perry, 403rd chief of chaplain's assistants. "Her singing is a ministry in itself. She has truly enhanced our worship service."

Much of her lyrical inspiration comes from her own life experiences, drawing on past and present relationships and other situations to infuse her songs with sincerity. Seeing the impact of her music on people, further serves as a catalyst spurring her toward her goal.

"Sometimes people may come [to a performance] with a bad heart, they may be feeling down that day," she said. "After I finish singing, sometimes people will come up to me and say 'Oh! You just lifted my spirits.'"

With influences like Beyonce Knowles, Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight and Anita Baker, her refreshing yet original and sassy sound mixes a little bit of soul, a little bit of Motown and a pinch of new era urban, pop, and hip hop.

Since the release of her first CD entitled *Southern Girl*, under the stage name J'nette, Airman Hemphill now embarks on the next leg of her burgeoning career, promoting her album and appearing in upcoming concerts. Her next appearance is set for 8 p.m. June 30 at the Pre-Fourth of July Jam at Edwards Arena, Edwards, Miss.

Her feet firmly on the path, this Reservist learned to follow her passions to make her dream come true and encourages others to take that first step to fulfill their ambitions.

Singing at UTA Chapel Service, Senior Airman Jeannette Hemphill puts her passion into play by sharing her vocal talents. The personnel apprentice recently released her first CD entitled *Southern Girl*.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Ryan Labadens

If the Shoe Fits . . .

By Senior Airman Tabitha Spinks
Staff Photojournalist

Whether she is preparing aircrews for the flightline or stomping down the fashion runway herself, Senior Airman Diechea McGee follows both her dreams toward success. Her careers both require confidence, discipline and work ethic, but that's where the two diverge. On any given day she may be wearing combat boots or spiky high heels.

While here at Keesler, the friendly Airman, who always seems to have a smile on her face, serves as a flight manager with the 815th Airlift Squadron. As a traditional Reservist she has worked to keep the paperwork straight for a little more than three years.

Not only does her military bearing show while on duty she is also able to maintain her composure, class and style while pursuing her civilian career posing for the camera as a professional model.

"I never really had the courage to do something like this until I joined the Air Force Reserve," she said. "The military gave me enough confidence in myself to pursue this dream. The Air Force made me feel like I could actually make it."

Her career as a model began in 2006 when she placed third in a state modeling competition similar to America's Next Top Model. After the contest, she began attending John Casablanca's Modeling School in Memphis, Tenn.

"I never actually thought I could perform at this level," said Airman McGee.

Since starting at the school, she has modeled for Ebony magazine, NASCAR, and ads for the Gillette Fusion Razor. She was also chosen to appear with pop-star Justin Timberlake on Good Morning America. One of her most memorable jobs, thus far, was with Black Entertainment Television's Black College Tour.

"I have learned a lot and I am always meeting new and interesting people from different places just as I do in the Air Force," said the outgoing 23 year-old.

Airman McGee said the people she works with in modeling never imagine her in the military because she is girly and prissy in her civilian life.

"I heard in conversation that Diechea was in the military and it came as quite a shock," said Paula Smith, director of John Casablanca and Model Talent

Management. "She comes off as so feminine and walks so gracefully. She does such a great job; it's hard for me to imagine her in the Air Force."

"I had to learn to separate the two and then adjust," said Airman McGee. "When I'm modeling, people bring me water or whatever I want. My clothes are even picked out for me. When I'm here on duty, I have to get up and walk down the hall to get my own water, do my own thing."

Airman McGee mentioned how it is nice to be pampered but at the same time nice to have her independent side.

"It's a good balance," she said.

"The two being in such contrast is a good thing," said Smith. "She is allowed to be outgoing in one aspect and she has that discipline as well. It is probably a challenge, but it's a very good mix."

Even with two diverse careers, there are times when the two overlap.

"We may book her one weekend and it will be her duty weekend," said Smith. "The Air Force is the priority, but we don't mind because when we do book her, she does such an awesome job."

Long hours and little rest became one of the toughest adjustments for the small-town girl.

"Traveling from place-to-place, whether it's Memphis or Biloxi, you never know when a job will pop up," she said. "I have to be available when my agent calls. One time I went a week with only eight hours of sleep."

"My mom and dad have been my biggest encouragement," she said. "If it weren't for God blessing me with this gift, my family and my time in the Air Force Reserve, it would not be possible."

Airman McGee has embraced her title as Citizen Airman and lives it out to the fullest, marching her way toward the spot light as a citizen and soaring her way to the top as an Airman.

"I came from a small town where people don't believe they could ever do anything like this," she said. "Because I was able to follow my dream, I'm hoping to pave the way for girls who grow up in small towns to become whatever they want to be."

From combat boots to high heels, Senior Airman Diechea McGee (pictured inset) balances two careers serving as a flight manager with the 815th Airlift Squadron as a Citizen Airman and a fashion model in her civilian life.

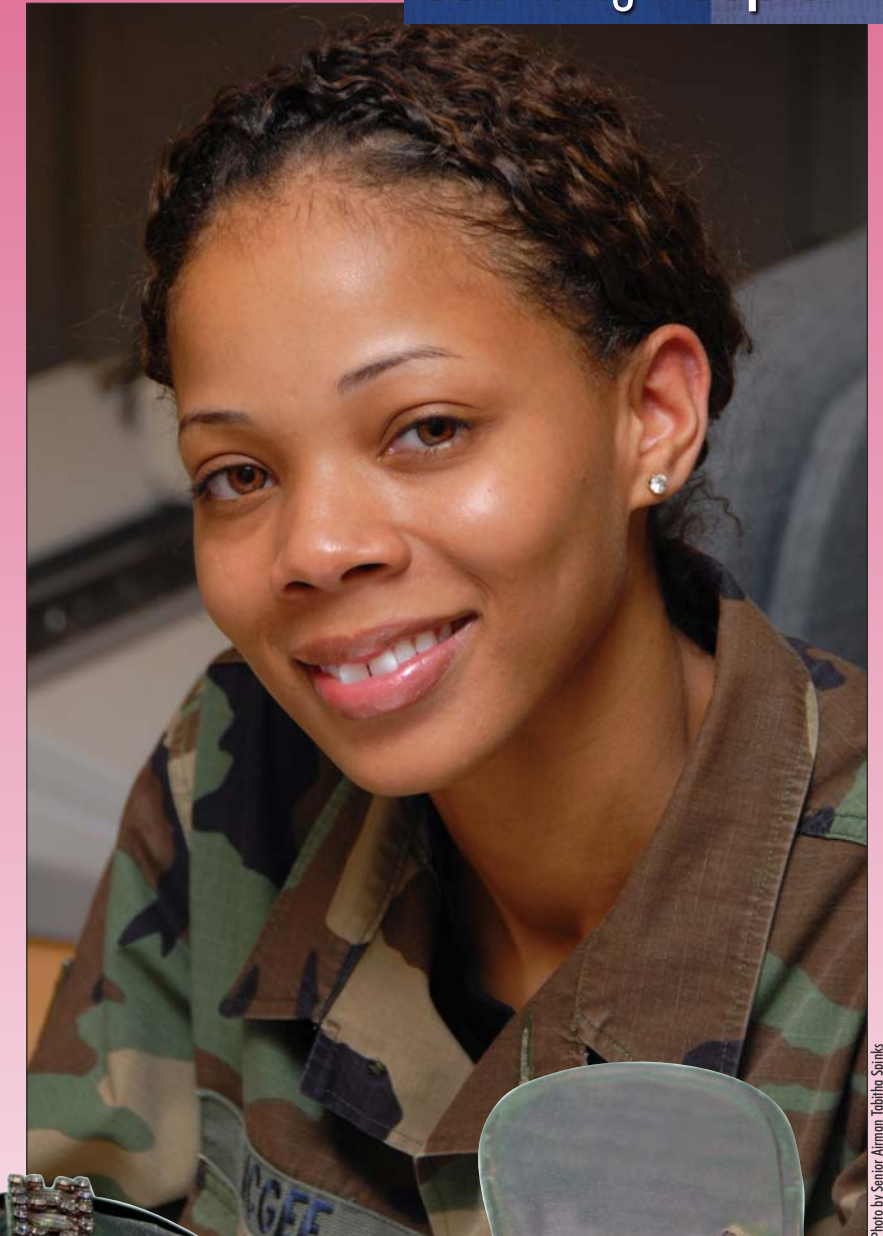
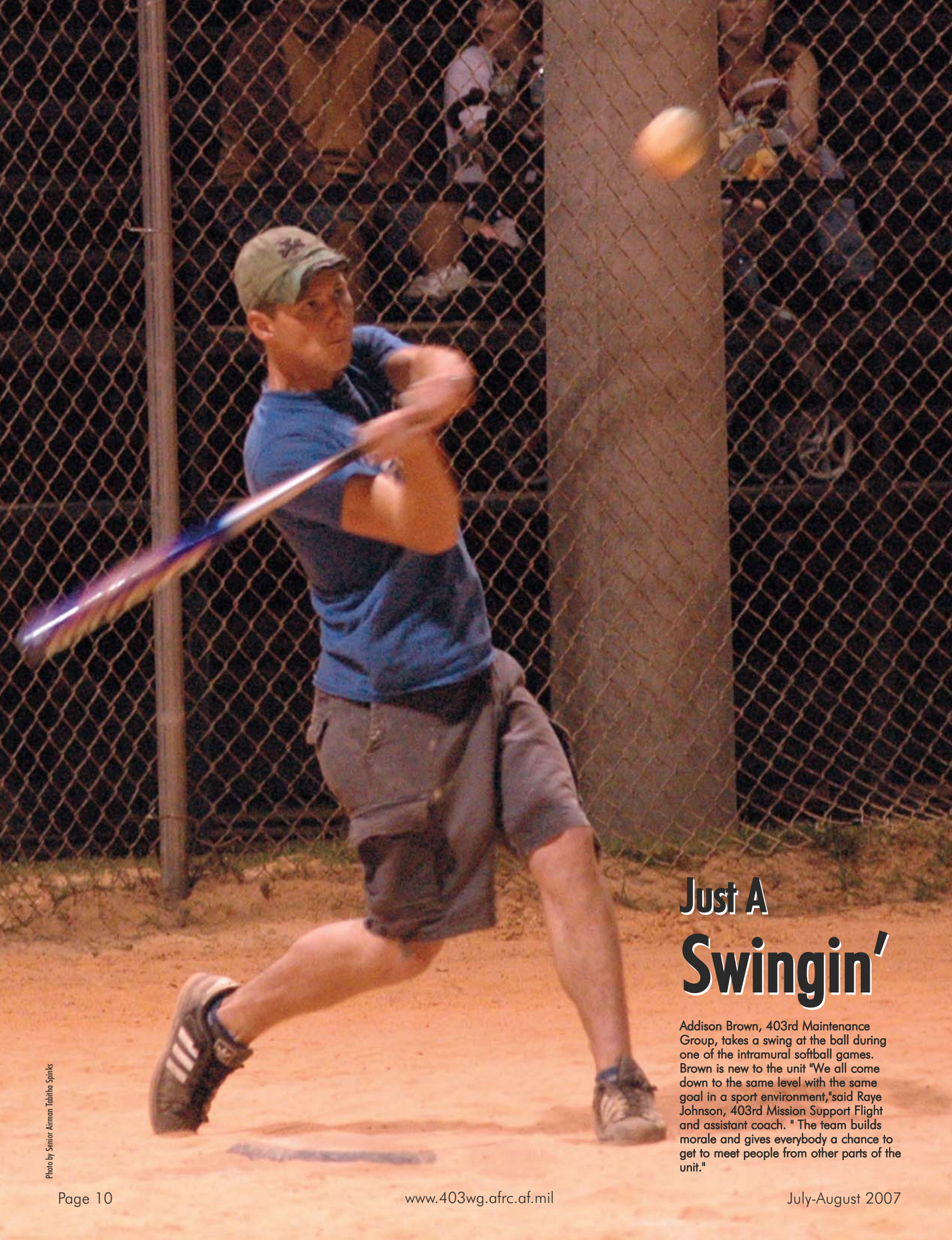


Photo by Senior Airman Tabitha Spinks





Just A Swingin'

Addison Brown, 403rd Maintenance Group, takes a swing at the ball during one of the intramural softball games. Brown is new to the unit "We all come down to the same level with the same goal in a sport environment," said Raye Johnson, 403rd Mission Support Flight and assistant coach. "The team builds morale and gives everybody a chance to get to meet people from other parts of the unit."

Photo by Senior Airman Tabitha Sparks

Gulf Wing ORI Prep



Lefty or Righty? Swap it

If you shoot the M-16 left handed, you will not be able to fire properly when wearing a gas mask straight from the factory - the filter must be swapped from the right to left side. Before attempting to swap the filter, visit the 403rd Readiness, or at M-16 training see your instructor for a new gasket for the mask; the old one is unusable and ineffective once removed. (The gaskets will also be available during chemical warfare training on UTAs)

To swap sides, follow these instructions.

- Locate the D-ring on the end of the mask waist strap (it's shaped like a D)
- Using the D-ring like a screwdriver, remove the side voice-mitter retaining ring
- Remove the voice-mitter and the gasket
- Unscrew the filter and remove white plastic deflector shield from the inside of the mask
- Remove the deflector shield retainer
- Throw the used gasket away

- Insert the new gasket and voice-mitter on the opposite side of the mask, and use the D-ring to install it
- Reassemble the deflector shield and filter on the opposite side

**If you have already swapped the sides of the filter on the mask without using a new gasket, the mask is ineffective and needs a new one.*



Photos by 2nd Lt. J. Justin Pearce

Special Pullout Section

- Hurricane Tracking Map
- Preparedness Guide

2007

Hurricane Preparedness Guide



Photo Illustration by 2nd Lt. J. Justin Pearce and Tech. Sgt. James B. Pritchett

A hurricane is a severe tropical storm, that forms in the southern Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico or in the eastern Pacific Ocean. Hurricanes need warm tropical oceans, moisture and light winds above them. If the right conditions last long enough, a hurricane can produce violent winds, incredible waves, torrential rains and floods. They remain one of the deadliest forces of nature.

Hurricane season officially began June 1 and continues through Nov. 30.

For the first time this hurricane season, the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron will be flying with a 'smurf.' No, not the cartoon, but a new piece of equipment to collect more data for the National Hurricane Center.

The Stepped-Frequency Microwave Radiometer, affectionately known as "smurf," is a state-of-the-art instrument designed to continuously and accurately measure the winds at the ocean's surface directly below the aircraft.

The smurf is installed on the WC-130J inside a pod attached to the aircraft's wing. As the plane flies through a storm, the smurf senses microwave radiation naturally emitted from foam created on the sea by winds at the surface. Computers then determine wind speeds based on the levels of microwave radiation detected.

Currently, winds are extrapolated from the winds at the aircraft's altitude or from a dropsonde released from the aircraft, however, the smurf directly measures the surface winds and is not confined to a single point like the dropsonde. This constant measurement of surface winds gives the National Hurricane Center a more complete picture of the storm.

The smurf can also determine rainfall rates within a storm system. This, in addition to wind speeds at flight level, provide structural detail of the storm.

Two Hurricane Hunter aircraft were equipped with the smurf by the end of June with one added each month until all 10 WC-130J aircraft are outfitted with the smurf pod, the last to be equipped in March, 2008.

The Hurricane Hunters improve the accuracy of the NHC forecast by 30 percent, a number likely to rise with the use of the smurf.

From Staff Reports

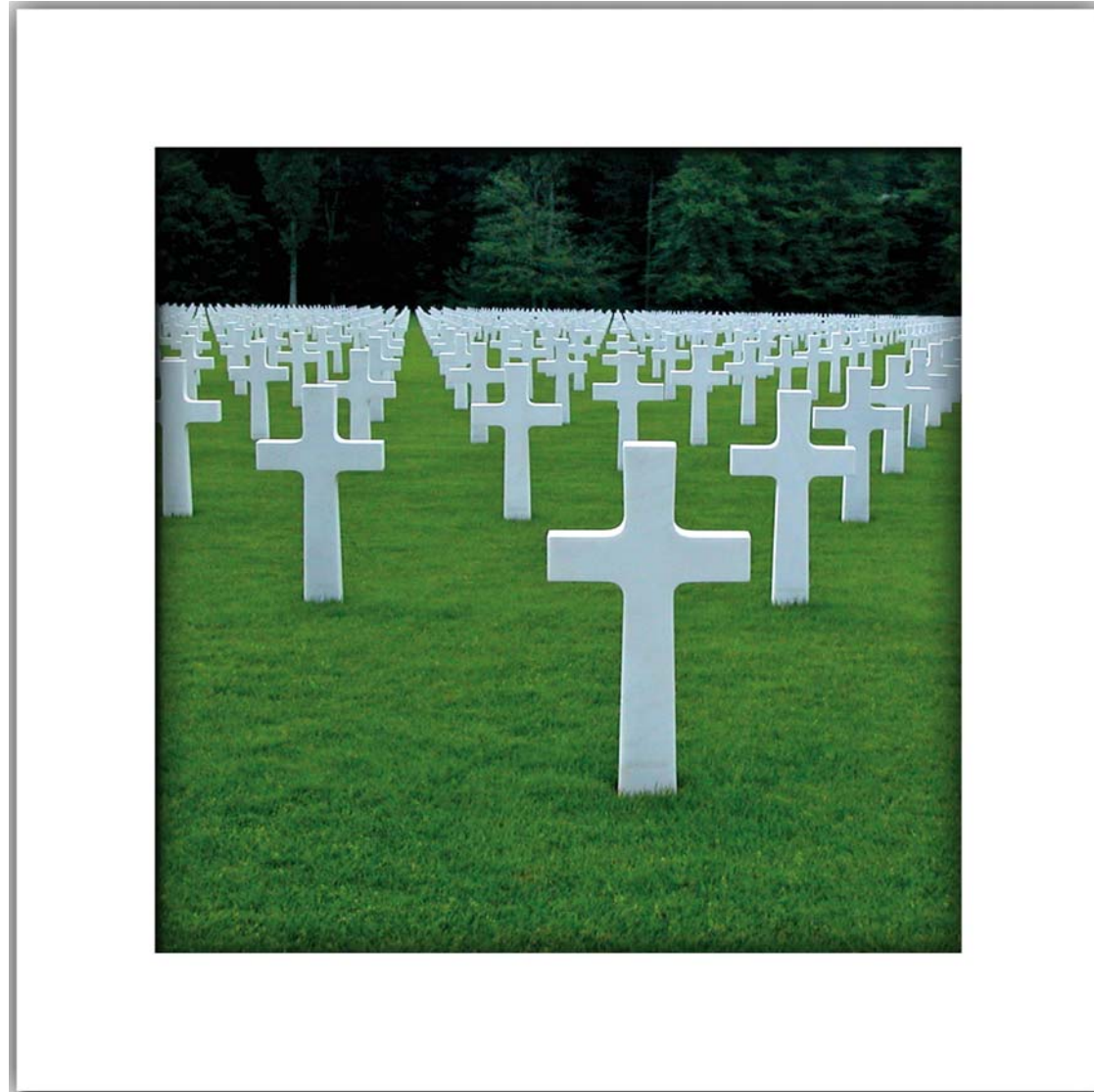


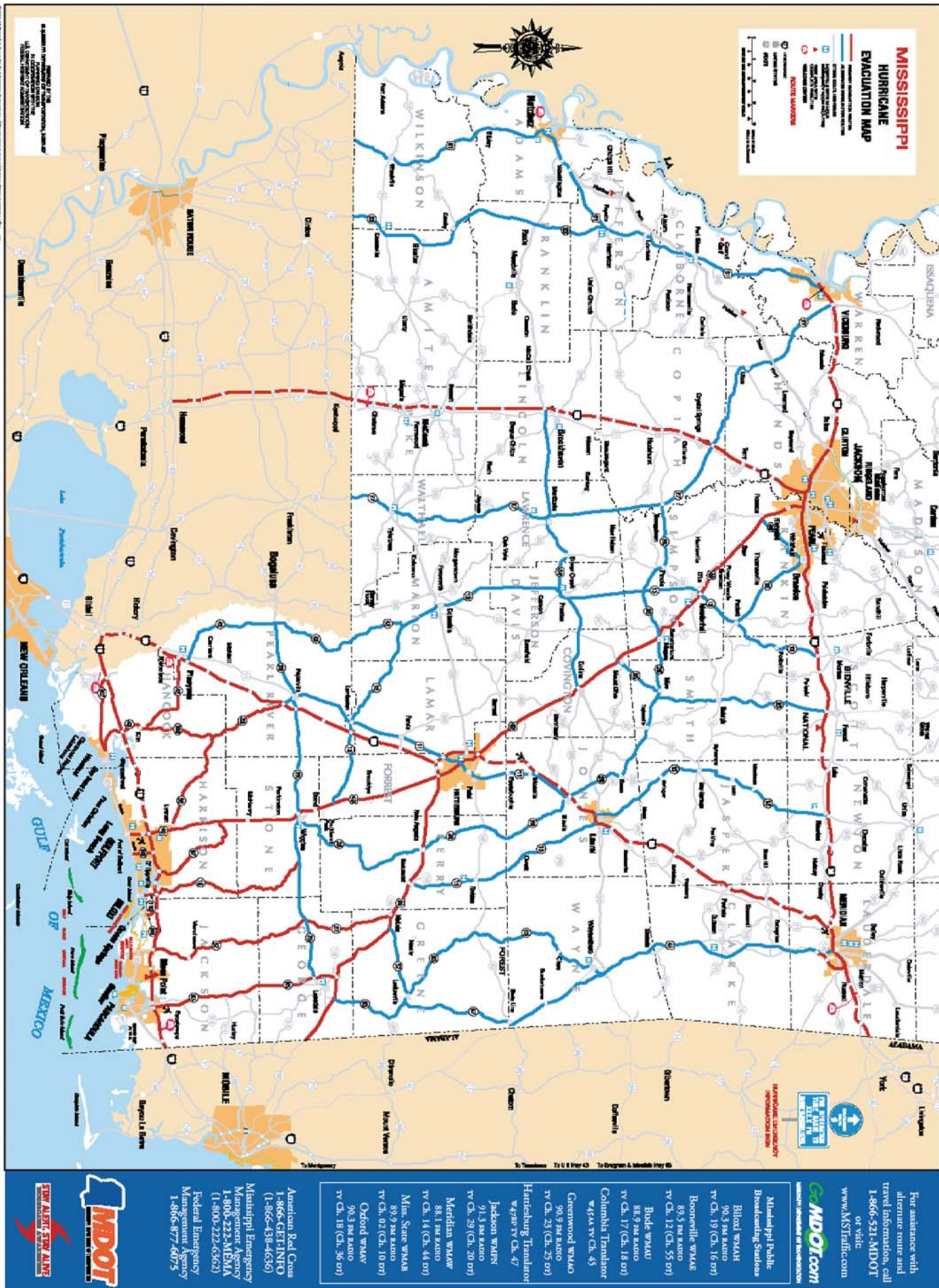
Photo by Master Sgt. Michele Rivera, 815th Airlift Squadron

Ardennes American Cemetery and Memorial

While on temporary duty at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, Master Sgt. Michele Rivera, first sergeant, 815th Airlift Squadron, took a day trip on a rare day off to Belgium in search of history. Her main priority, she said, was to pay respects to those from the "Greatest Generation" who paid the ultimate price to ensure our way of life was preserved. While visiting Ardennes American Cemetery, she also found the gravesite of a possible relative. She said she is anxious to research the family tree and find out more about the American serviceman buried in this place of honor.

The cemetery is located near the southeast edge of Neupré, 12 miles southwest of Liège, Belgium. The 90-acre cemetery contains the graves of 5,329 American military dead, many of whom died in the 1944 Ardennes winter offensive, also known as the "Battle of the Bulge." The headstones are aligned in straight rows that form a Greek cross on the lawns and are framed by tree masses. The cemetery served as the location of the Central Identification Point for the American Graves Registration Service of the War Department during much of the life of the Service.





Hurricane Preparedness Guide

Season began June 1

Coastal residents should keep a hurricane evacuation kit stocked at all times with necessary items (see checklist in box below). Don't wait until a storm is in the gulf to get ready for it.

The National Weather Service issues a Hurricane Watch when hurricane conditions are possible within the next 36 hours in the area of the Watch. A Hurricane Warning is issued when conditions are expected within 24 hours or less.

When a Hurricane Watch is issued, residents should monitor the news for the storm's progress and development, fuel automobiles, check batteries, stock up on canned food, first aid supplies, drinking water and prescription medicines and have an extra supply of cash on hand.

To help protect homes, prepare to cover all windows and door openings with shutters or other shielding materials and bring lawn furniture and other loose, lightweight objects inside.

Normally harmless objects can become deadly missiles in a hurricane.

Hurricane evacuation

Once a warning has been issued, follow through on preparation activities and follow instructions issued by local officials. If told to evacuate, leave early. Expect delays and traffic jams on hurricane evacuation routes. Remember, raised drawbridges allowing boats to seek safe harbors often interrupt bridge traffic.

Seeking shelter

If you decide to stay in your home, turn your refrigerator to maximum cold and open only when necessary. Turn off utilities if directed by local authorities, turn off propane tanks, unplug small appliances and fill bathtubs and large containers with water for sanitary purposes.

If the winds become extremely strong, stay away from windows and doors and find refuge in a small interior room, closet or hallway. Close all interior doors and secure and brace external doors.

Go to an interior first-floor room if you live in a multi-floor home and lie on the floor under a table or another sturdy object.

Storm surge

Under no circumstances should you try to ride out the storm in a mobile home, a high-rise building or a home in a low-lying flood area. Hurricane-force winds are even stronger at higher elevations.

People living close to the gulf are especially vulnerable because of the deadly storm surge. Storm surge is a massive dome of water that is often 50 miles wide that sweeps across the coastline near the area where the eye of the hurricane makes landfall.

The hammering effect of the waves acts like a giant bulldozer sweeping away everything in its path. Nine out of 10 hurricane deaths are caused by the storm surge.

Deceptive calm

Be especially cautious of the eye of the

hurricane. If the storm center passes directly overhead, there will be a lull in the wind lasting up to 30 minutes.

Resist the temptation to go outside during this deceptive calm. As the eye passes, winds will suddenly return to hurricane force - from the opposite direction.

After-storm checklist

After the storm, keep listening to weather reports because tropical systems often spawn tornadoes and other severe weather. Wait until an area has been declared safe before leaving your shelter or returning to your home.

Avoid weakened bridges and washed-out roads and do not drive into flooded areas. Some roads may be closed; do not drive around barricades.

Check gas, water and electrical lines and appliances for damage. Be aware that utility service can be severely interrupted by hurricanes. Depending on the severity of the damage, several days could pass before service is restored.

Do not drink or prepare food with tap water until you are certain it has not been contaminated.

Avoid using candles and other open flames indoors. Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Use the telephone only to report life-threatening emergencies.

Be especially cautious around trees that have been weakened by the storm.

Hurricane season continues through Nov. 30.

Planning: Coping When Tragedy Strikes

Where will your family be when disaster strikes? They could be anywhere - at work, at school, or in the car. How will you find each other? Will you know if your children are safe? What would you do if basic services - water, gas, electricity or telephones - were cut off?

Families should be prepared for all hazards that could affect their community. Each family should use the following steps to develop a family disaster plan.

Gather information about hazards that can affect your community. Contact your local National Weather Service office, emergency management or civil defense office. Also contact your local American Red Cross chapter.

Find out what type of disasters could occur and how you should respond.

Learn your community's warning signals and evacuation plans. Also find out how your workplace or your children's school deals with disaster.

Meet with your family to create your plan. Discuss the information you have gathered. Pick two places to meet: a place right outside your home for a sudden emergency, such as fire, and a place outside of your neighborhood in case you can't return

home. Also choose an out-of-state friend as your "family check-in contact" for everyone to call if separated. Discuss what you would do if advised to evacuate.

Implement your plan.

- 1) Post emergency numbers (fire, police, ambulance, etc.) by telephones.
- 2) Install safety features in your house, such as smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.
- 3) Inspect your home for potential hazards (such as items that can move, fall, break, or catch fire) and correct them.
- 4) Have your family learn basic safety measures, such as CPR and first aid; how to use a fire extinguisher; and how and when to turn off water, gas, and electricity in your home.
- 5) Teach children how and when to call 911 or the local Emergency Services number.
- 6) Keep enough supplies in your home to meet your needs for at least three days. Assemble a disaster supplies kit.

Practice and maintain your plan. Periodically ask your family members about emergency meeting places, phone numbers, and safety rules to make sure they remember them by conducting drills.

Hurricane Survival Kit

If a hurricane hits, do you have enough of these items on hand to get you through the emergency?

- Matches
- Nonelectric can opener
- Extra prescription medicine
- Baby food, diapers and formula
- First-Aid kit
- Portable cooler
- Enough bottled water for 2 quarts per day for each person
- Containers of water for sanitary use
- Eating utensils
- Battery-operated radio
- Flashlights, extra batteries
- 3/4-inch plywood to board windows
- Lantern, fuel
- Fire extinguisher
- Bleach
- Mosquito repellent/netting
- Plastic-sheeting
- Tools
- 100 feet of rope
- Sleeping bags and blankets
- Trash bags
- Duct tape
- Battery charger for cellular phone

Aircrew from the 815th Airlift Squadron flew missions to Africa in support of Operation Joint Endeavor. One challenge pilots faced was landing on unmarked dirt strips.



Dusty Missions: Flying Jennies Support GWOT

By Senior Airman Tabitha Spinks
Staff Photojournalist

Scorching temperatures, dirt runways, dust storms, and other oddities may not seem like the ideal conditions for operating a C-130, but stand fast; 815th Airlift Squadron aircrews are out to prove the C-130J is the optimal tactical airlift aircraft.

A crew from the 815th Airlift Squadron's Flying Jennies tested the capabilities of the J-model on a recent deployment to Germany including missions to Africa.

"The plane performed phenomenally," said Captain Darren Ray, a pilot with the unit for 12 years who has flown both the old C-130E and the new C-130J. "If it weren't for the capabilities of the J-model, we would not have been able to complete those missions."

In support of Special Forces, the Flying Jennies were given an opportunity to deliver supplies to remote locations in Africa, challenging the pilots to land the "stretched" C-130J-30 on unimproved dirt strips.

"The stopping distance is much shorter on a dirt strip," said Captain Mark Suckow, also a pilot with the 815th AS. "Dust is flying everywhere and it is harder on the aircraft."

The C-130J is able to carry more weight than previous iterations of the C-130 allowing for the job to get done in a timelier manner. Because the landing distance depends highly on the weight of the aircraft, pilots used assault procedures to land.

A shorter stopping distance was

only a minor difficulty in landing the plane. To put a spin on things, the crew had to land in the middle of a dust storm.

"I've landed on dirt strips before, and I've flown through a dust storm, but here, I had to land on a dirt strip in a dust storm," said Capt. Ray. "There was less than a mile of visibility. If it weren't for the advanced avionics on the J-model, we would not have been able to locate the landing zone."

"We get the coordinates and are able

to find the zone with no problem," said Capt. Suckow.

The crew not only dealt with dust storms but other situations you would not see on a typical airfield.

"Every mission something dramatic would happen," said Capt. Suckow. "One time there was a huge lightning bolt that kind of made us jump. Luckily, the situational awareness of the new aircraft is much better."

Another thing that pilots had to keep in mind was clearing the runway.

"We may have to over-fly a piece of dirt strip to scare off a camel or something," laughed Capt. Ray.

Despite the conditions, aboard the plane was a well-trained crew that could handle any situation that would arise, according to Capt. Suckow.

"These are the type of missions that the 815th was designed to do," said Capt. Ray. "We have been training for so long, and it feels good to actually do it. We applied what we do at home to get the job done." ▶



Courtesy Photo 815th Airlift Squadron

The Flying Jennies regularly conduct Joint Airborne and Air Transportability Training including air drops and combat landings on unimproved runways during daylight hours and at night using night vision goggles to prepare for this kind of mission.

“This is what we do, and to actually be applying this builds morale and increases training and readiness,” said Capt. Ray. “Missions like this not only

benefit the Air Force but the individual as well.”

“You’re working in an environment that you aren’t used to and using everything we trained for,” said Capt. Suckow. “There is satisfaction when the day is done after accomplishing each mission knowing you helped out as far as survivability. It’s neat to know we took part in supporting the War on Terror.”

With the advanced technology aboard the C-130J, the Flying Jennies are motivated and ready to complete other missions quicker and safer than was possible in previous versions of the aircraft.

“I’m glad to see the J-model get public attention and the respect it deserves,” said Capt. Ray. “It is important to get its awesome capabilities known to the public.”



Courtesy Photo 815th Airlift Squadron



Courtesy Photo 815th Airlift Squadron

(Above) Capt. Darren Ray, aircraft commander, prepares to brief his crew before takeoff from a dirt landing strip in Africa. In support of the Global War on Terror, the Flying Jennies flew missions out of Ramstein Air Base, Germany including this one into Africa.

(Left) Aircraft 8153 receives services from an odd-looking vehicle. (Facing Page) Master Sgt. Dave Cooper, loadmaster, 815th Airlift Squadron, prepares a vehicle as cargo before take off from an airstrip in Africa. Sergeant Cooper checks placards for accurate weights which helps him ensure the load plan is properly balanced and to maintain the center of gravity on the aircraft.

(Below) Loadmasters direct ground personnel while loading cargo to be delivered to remote locations. Among the supplies are humanitarian needs to support Special Operations Command.



Courtesy Photo 815th Airlift Squadron

Reaching for the Stars

By Senior Airman Tabitha Sprinks
Staff Photojournalist

A childhood love of astronomy and a growing family influenced Lt. Col. Jon Talbot to abandon his old hobby of boating and renew his pursuit of scanning the heavens with a telescope.

“It’s a way of going back in time. It’s very relaxing and I have peace and quiet,” said Colonel Talbot, chief aerial reconnaissance weather officer with the Hurricane Hunters. “What I like about astronomy is that it reminds me that we are fairly insignificant in the grand scheme of the universe. It goes beyond the day-to-day hustle and allows me to appreciate the grandeur outside our small spot in the solar system. ▶



Photo by Senior Airman Tabitha Sprinks

Lt. Col. Jon Talbot stands next to a Carbon Fiber Astrograph he spent 5 months building. A change in temperature can affect the shape of some scopes causing the focus to change. The composite material that makes up this astrograph does not change shape with changing temperatures allowing focus to remain the same throughout the night.

This often photographed area of the sky is filled with emission nebula, some reflection nebula and dust. M20, upper right is a emission and reflection nebula called the Trifid. M8, the Lagoon Nebula, is the bright object in the lower right. To its east lie several emission and reflection nebula. This image was captured by Lt. Col Jon Talbot at the Stark Bayou Observatory, Ocean Springs, Miss. during June and July 2006.

Photo by Lt. Col. Jon Talbot, 53rd WBS

He recalls the telescope his uncle bought for a cousin when he was younger and how they enjoyed looking at the stars. As his children got older and he had to sell his boat, he needed something to occupy his time and decided to buy a cheap telescope.

"It was a pain to set up and difficult to work with," said Colonel Talbot. "It forced me to learn the sky and understand the constellations. They don't really offer classes for this sort of thing, so everything I know had to be self-taught."

He subscribed to a magazine and began reading about astronomy and conversing with people online. Over the years, he was able to upgrade his equipment and began taking photos.

His equipment is stored in a 10'x10' observatory in his backyard. It has a roll-off roof and light shields that flip

up to block out lights that come from his neighbors' homes or his own house.

When he is ready to go, he uses two telescopes to make photographs. One is an imaging scope and the other is a guide scope that sits on top. Both have cameras attached to the back that are equipped with a cooled chip that operates 30 degrees celsius colder than the outside temperature. This reduces noise and makes the chip very sensitive to faint light, allowing him to record objects millions of light years away.

Colonel Talbot spent five months building one of the imaging scopes he uses. It is a 10-inch Carbon Fiber Astrograph built with the same composite material used to make some parts on the C-130-J he flies aboard at his job. He put in a 10-inch, hand-ground mirror which gives the photos a higher resolution adding more detail to

the stars.

The process of astrophotography is very time consuming and can take 10-20 hours to fully capture one image. Currently, there are fewer than 5,000 people in the United States who participate in this hobby.

With one exposure taking 5-10 minutes all of the telescopes are situated on a robotic mount. This mount is able to keep up with the rotation of the earth so that the telescope can focus precisely on one area.

All of this equipment is hooked up to his laptop which has software that can control it throughout the entire night.

"I don't have to be out there the whole time that it is taking these photos," said Colonel Talbot. "I can be inside doing my own thing."

He spends a few more hours combining the photos to get just one with the best quality.

"I get about one or two photos a month with the amount of time it takes," he said.

There are only about 10 clear nights a month that allow for good photography, according to Colonel Talbot. The moon plays a big part in this because of the amount of light it emits.

"I spent hours shooting garbage photos," said Colonel Talbot. "Over the past seven years, I have learned by trial and error to get the pictures I am taking today."

A few of his photos have been submitted and used in different magazines including Sky and Telescope: The Essential Magazine of Astronomy.

"One thing I can say is that when he finds something he likes, he gives it 110 percent," said his wife, Janice.

Colonel Talbot said it's mind-boggling how small we are in comparison to the universe and that encourages his fascination in learning more about what is beyond our daily routines.

"Eventually, I may go back to an object I've shot in the past and see if there is any change," he said. "I could spend a lifetime enjoying this hobby."

(Left) This image shows part of the North American Nebula NGC7000 in central Cygnus. The famous cygnus wall, a highly energized shock front gives a high contrast to the deep adjacent gulf of Mexico, filled with complex dark gas and dust lanes. The light from young energetic stars is slowly transforming cold gas to hot gas, with the advancing boundary between the two known as an ionization front. Particularly dense and intricate filaments of cold gas are visible along the front. The distance to the North American Nebula is estimated at 1,600 light years.



Photo by Lt. Col. Jon Talbot, 53rd WFS



Photo by Lt. Col. Jon Talbot, 53rd WFS



Photo by Senior Airman Tabitha Spinks

(Above) Using a laptop computer, Colonel Talbot uses software to control his astrophotography equipment. When he locates a desired object on with the starmapping software he programs the astrograph to set focus and it captures images throughout the night.



Photo by Senior Airman Tabitha Spinks

(Top) This photo of the Spiral Galaxy also known as M101 made by Lt. Col. Jon Talbot, reveals some of the enormity of space. This galaxy is about 170,000 light years across as compared to 100,000 for our own Milky Way. In addition, the Spiral Galaxy is bursting with more than a trillion stars, 10 times that of the Milky Way. For those interested in seeing it with a telescope it's a big, bright, face-on spiral in Ursa Major (near the Big Dipper) and it's up most of the year.

(Left) Before building the Carbon Fiber Astrograph, Colonel Talbot used this refractor telescope. Now he uses it for searching out objects in the night sky. He says he still enjoys looking through it and wows neighborhood kids with images unavailable to the naked eye.

Beware Unofficial Airman Battle Uniforms

WASHINGTON—Commercial manufacturers have begun to advertise sale of the new Airman Battle Uniform at various online Web sites. Air Force officials warn Airmen these uniforms are not the authorized items provided by the Air Force's official source, Defense Supply Center Philadelphia, and may not meet the service's stringent specifications.

Many Airmen who want to get the uniform immediately may be tempted to purchase these uniforms, potentially sacrificing the safety and quality of the DSCP-procured uniforms scheduled to be available for purchase at Army and Air Force Exchanges Service locations in October.

Many of these websites are advertising their uniforms as 'official' and 'fully certified,' however, no commercial vendors currently have Air Force certification. All uniforms must be purchased through DSCP or AAFES when they become available.

When the Army introduced its Army Combat Uniform, it faced similar issues, according to a spokesperson for AAFES. Many soldiers purchased uniforms from uncertified commercial vendors, and the uniforms did not meet Army specifications.

In many cases, the pockets were improperly sewn or sized, the stitching was incorrect, and the weight, quality and feel of the garments were inferior. There were also safety issues.

The (certified) ACU (and ABU) have an inherent non-infrared quality that makes them undetectable by night-vision equipment. The knockoffs may not have that same quality.

Air Force News Service



Airman Battle Uniform

AU Begins CCAF to Bachelor Program

Starting June 15, Airmen can now apply their Community College of the Air Force credits toward a bachelor's degree from a variety of universities and colleges. This can be done through the Air Force Virtual Education Center which links a prospective student to the new Air University Associate-to-Baccalaureate Cooperative program.

The Air Force vision is to provide distance learning and bachelor's degree opportunities for Airmen. It also meets AU's goal of providing educational opportunities

to the enlisted force. The Air Force Portal acts as the gateway to the program allowing students to do everything online.

To participate in the AU-ABC program, registrants must be active duty Air Force, Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard. However, degree requirements can be completed after a member retires or separates from the service.

Air University

Web Link:

<http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123050966>

Home Projects: Don't Do It 'To' Yourself

Take care and remember safety procedures when completing Do-It-Yourself projects. Each year, home power tools are involved in as many as 110,000 emergency room visits. More than 65 percent of these injuries involve power saws.

More than 200,000 visits to emergency rooms each year are related to yard and garden equipment, including chain saws, lawn mowers and hand garden tools.

Annually, mishaps involving ladders and step stools injure more than 150,000 people.

403rd Wing Safety

Hatch Act Prohibits Activities Related to Politics on E-mail

Robbins Air Force Base, Ga.—Using official Air Force e-mail on an Air Force-assigned computer to send a political message can get a person fired, convicted of a federal crime and possibly placed in prison.

The Hatch Act bars federal civilian employees and a Department of Defense directive forbids Airmen from engaging in political activity while in uniform, on duty, or in a government building or vehicle. This prohibition includes use of official e-mail in connection with or concerning a partisan political campaign for elected office.

Also, a separate federal criminal statute known as the Anti-Lobbying Act makes it a federal crime to use any appropriated-fund resource, including official duty time or government computers/e-mails, to participate in or to encourage others to participate in "grass roots lobbying efforts" contacting members of Congress regarding pending legislation.

Airmen and civilian employees are free to contact a member of Congress in their personal capacity on personal time outside their government workplace. This includes supporting or opposing any legislation they like, or for any other reason. DOD directives, the Joint Ethics Regulation and an Air Force Instruction repeat these prohibitions.

Air Force Reserve Command



MVP

Playbook Calls for Individual Leadership From Every Airman

By Lt. Col. Kathryn Karr
Commander, 403rd Mission Support Group

As a newcomer to the 403rd Wing, I am coming into the game at a critical time during unit preparations for the Operational Readiness Inspection.

As a long-time Reservist, I have experienced several OREs and ORIs and know we are in this game to win.

Now we arrive at that time in the season when we need to continually practice the plays until we know we have the team and the playbook that together will give us a big win.

Safety First

As with all we do as members of the military, safety must remain our number one priority. We cannot accomplish our training or our mission if we have broken equipment or Airmen.

Safety is a concern in all we do, both on and off duty, to ensure we can all show up for the ORE and ORI and play our positions.

With the "101 Days of Summer," hurricane season and a very hard-driving agenda as we exercise our unit in our areas of expertise, this is a critical time for safety awareness.

IG/ORI

Yes, we get a grade, and yes, they are

inspectors. However, this is the first time in a decade that the 403rd Wing has an opportunity to show just how good we are and how well we can excel at our mission. I don't think there is a single Airman in this wing who wants to do anything less than the very best job possible.

Taking Responsibility

Leadership is not only for Senior Officers and Senior NCOs. It is something that must be learned and performed at all levels. If a key NCO falls out of play, the next-level Airman in each functional area needs to be trained and ready to step up and fill in to do the job to the best of their capability.

We all have experience to do the job, just at different levels. Every Airman should expect at any time to be called on to handle a bigger task. We need to develop a mindset that an effort at any level may be the play that scores.

Attitude/Customs and Courtesies

Performance of our mission is not the only thing that counts. As in the Olympics, those who are grading us in the ORI will also give us extra points for style, flair, dazzle and charisma.

If we are excellent in the performance of our jobs, but do them with the wrong attitude, with less than enthusiasm or in a way that does not incorporate all facets of what we have learned in the military, we will not get the best grade possible.

Whether through personal pride, peer pressure or endlessly looking at every tiny detail, we need to practice and polish until we not only look good — we shine!

Most Valuable Players

Every player in the game has an opportunity to become the Most Valuable Player. This status isn't linked to grade, length of service, skill level or any 'longevity' measure.

Every Airman, regardless of grade or position, is extremely valuable and vital to our success. The MVP could be you.

We have the talent and we have the playbook. Over the next 10 UTA days and five ORE days we need to practice teamwork, communications and our job skills until we are ready to play the perfect game and show the world the 403rd Wing is the best wing in the Air Force today. You have the power to get out there and make it happen!



Lt. Col. Kathryn Karr



Photo By Tech. Sgt. James B. Pritchett

Keeping His Eyes on the Sky

In his new job, Tech. Sgt. Troy Bickham, weather reconnaissance loadmaster, thinks about a whole new list of concerns whenever he flies. Formerly with the 41st Aerial Port Squadron, he weighed, measured and scrutinized cargo, manifests and weight distribution plans. Seeking a change and to open up promotion opportunities Sergeant Bickham retrained into his new career and joined the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron where he will fly as aircrew into hurricanes and tropical storms gathering data that will assist the National Hurricane Center in protecting coastal inhabitants.



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